

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

#BXNFMXY
#000029112109#
SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
901 COMMERCE ST
NASHVILLE TN 37203-3620

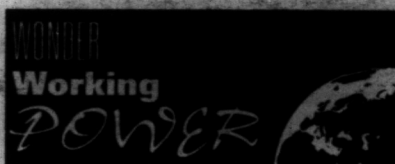
CARRIER ROUTE 39
005-DTM 12-10
000-50000

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

DECEMBER 10, 1998

VOL. 122

No. 43



Lottie Moon
Christmas Offering for
International Missions

NATIONAL GOAL:
\$110,000,000

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

Ex. Comm. okays hires

3

SS lesson writers named

4

Keyboard deadline looms

7

Letters to the editor

9

Revival in Costa Rica begins in the choir

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (BP) — Piano music drifts into the courtyard at the Baptist seminary in San Jose, Costa Rica. Inside a classroom, someone's playing the hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

On a balcony above the courtyard, Reyner Azofeifa sits outdoors talking with friends. It's just after 8 a.m. on a Friday, and he's already prayed for two hours with some of them. That's how he starts every Friday, his day off from his job as a graphic designer for an evangelical magazine.

These pray-ers are leaders of "Music and Missions" ("M & M"), a group of about 30 Baptist musicians in Costa Rica. Together they train praise teams — made up of several instrumentalists and singers — to lead music and worship in churches across the country.

That ministry was born out of revival, an answer to prayer that began just before a hymn festival for Costa Rican Baptists. In 1996, Azofeifa and IMB music missionary Dirce Cooper were discussing how to help Costa Rican Baptists rediscover the theological depth of hymns that had been neglected in a popular enthusiasm for praise choruses.

Azofeifa and Cooper hit upon the idea of having a hymn festival. Soon International Service Corps worker Cathy Rogers, from Vidalia, Ga., arrived to work in music missions. The festival became one of her first projects.

Rogers, a pianist, found and created hymn arrangements and enlisted musicians to provide accompaniment. Azofeifa and other Baptist musicians worked alongside her.



MUSIC AND MISSIONS — Costa Rican Baptist musician Rolando Vargas (left) and International Service Corps worker Cathy Rogers (right) lead part of a music and worship leadership seminar for praise and worship teams from evangelical churches in Costa Rica. These seminars are offered monthly as a ministry of "Music and Missions," a group of Baptist musicians in Costa Rica. (BP photo by Sandy King)

The nearly 500 worshipers who attended the festival were awed by the experience. "People said, 'we never dreamed you could worship that way through hymns,'" recalls IMB missionary Rick Lane, a youth and music ministries consultant from Greenbrier, Tenn.

But the event made an even bigger impression on the musicians involved. "It became the starting point of a ministry like we've never had before," adds Mrs. Cooper, a native Brazilian. "For weeks after the festival, these musicians cried together, shared their calls (to ministry) and expressed how they saw God's glory."

But the event's full impact

didn't hit Azofeifa until he watched it on video. "At the festival, I was so busy helping to direct everything that I didn't have time to be. But when I saw the video, I sat there and cried."

It was then that God gave him the idea of M & M. Later the Lord used him to pull together a team of musicians who focus on missions and evangelism. They also offer seminars to train evangelical praise and worship teams.

But even before M & M started, God already was at work among Christian musicians in Costa Rica. "There were people from different churches all over Costa Rica saying, 'God is showing me he wants to use music to change me — and to change oth-

ers,'" observes Lane. "And like in any spiritual awakening, it was spontaneous. And it was happening in the lives of many individuals."

Soon, God began doing something special with M & M members, too.

Last year musician Anne Marie Pinnock was named Costa Rican Baptists' first international missionary. She serves in the South American country of Guyana, where she's helping Baptists develop music ministries.

"Her appointment was so exciting for us," recalls guitarist Noemy Roldan of M & M. "We'd heard about her call and prayed with her about it for so long. Suddenly it became a reality."

As she saw Pinnock head overseas, Roldan sensed God's call to missions, too. Soon she'll be leaving to serve in Guyana alongside Pinnock.

Meanwhile, M & M's Rolando Vargas joined Mrs. Cooper and her husband, Roy, from Marion, S.C., in a church planting team. In January the team used church music to start a Baptist congregation called El Bosque Christian Community, which draws more than 100 worshipers each Sunday. The new church already has sent a missionary to Lebanon.

"For years we've prayed for revival in Costa Rica," says Roy Cooper. "It's amazing that God's bringing it about through the choir, those leading in praise and adoration. That says that God inhabits the praises of his people. When God's people praise him, they're really open to hearing his voice."

Christ at work around the world

◆ A new mission church on the Indonesian island of Sumatra held evangelistic services. The first night only 40 people came. Someone prayed for God to "shake and wake up everybody" to their need for salvation. At 1 a.m., an earthquake that registered 7.4 on the Richter Scale destroyed a town 50 km away. The next night, attendance at the services more than doubled to 85. The mission church has held weekly services ever since.

◆ In Turkey, members of an Islamic group tossed a grenade at a Christian bookstand, hoping to silence the gospel. Instead, bookstand manager Ibrahim Dogan gained a hearing far beyond any he'd had before — on national television. Dogan was standing directly in front of the grenade when it exploded. Wounded and lying on a stretcher, he repeatedly cried out, "Rab Isa! Rab Isa!" (Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!) Television stations played his proclamations numerous times as news of the terrorist attack was aired repeatedly. Muslims in the town were apologetic and now are more open to the gospel than ever.



Looking back

10 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board passes a motion recommending that Clarke College, a division of Mississippi College (MC), reach an enrollment of 300 full-time equivalent students by Sept. 1989, and if not, that MC Trustees close the college and dispose of all the properties.

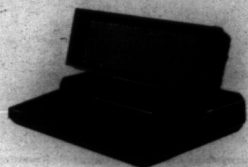
20 years ago

Citing health and family responsibilities, S. L. Harris presents his resignation as president of Clarke College at the Dec. meeting of the board of trustees. Harris came to Clarke a year and a half earlier from Texas. A. C. Johnson, director of development, was named by the trustees as acting president.

50 years ago

Newton Baptist Church and all its equipment and furnishing are destroyed by a fire discovered at 8 a.m. on Sunday. Damage is officially set at over \$50,000. The 40-year-old structure burned furiously and quickly and was completely demolished within an hour.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



**William H.
Perkins Jr.**
Editor

EDITOR
William H. Perkins Jr.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Carl M. White

EDITORIAL ASSOCIATE
Florence Larrimore

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Renee Walley

BOOKKEEPER
Betty Anne Bailey

LAYOUT/DESIGN
Joylin Davis

ADVERTISING/PROOFREADER
Debbie Sills

EDITORS EMERITI
Don McGregor
Guy Henderson

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Bettye Coward, Clinton;
Charles Dunagin, McComb
Larry Garner, Jackson;
David Petty, Jackson
Gary Richardson, West Point;
Debbie Sills, secretary.

**Postmaster: Send changes of address
to THE BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box
530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Send
news, communication, and address
changes to The Editor, BAPTIST
RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS
39205-0530 (601) 968-3800
Missrecord@aol.com**

VOLUME 122 NUMBER 43
(ISSN-0005-5778)
Published weekly except weeks of July 4
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi State
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription price
year payable in advance. Single copies
available for a one-time fee. Postage paid at
Jackson, MS. Member Association of State
Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items —
one calendar week prior to requested pub-
lication date. Advertising — two calendar
weeks prior to requested publication date.

Risking everything for the Call

Missionaries. What does that word mean to you? For those of us who grew up in Southern Baptist homes, images come to mind of larger-than-life characters visiting our churches this time of year, dressed in strange native garb, sharing their passion to give everyone in the world the opportunity to know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

It all sounded like a big adventure, didn't it? Living on the other side of the world. Traveling where there were no roads. Forging rivers. Learning new languages. Eating exotic foods.

I suspect it didn't occur at the time to most of us living behind these safe shores that many of these missionaries around the world were risking their lives for the cause — and continue to do so to this very day.

There was one new Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB)-appointed couple who could not attend their own appointment service Nov. 17 in Ft. Lauderdale, because their assigned mission field is an area of the world so hostile to the Gospel that they couldn't take a chance on being seen at a public ceremony.

As a matter of fact, IMB reported that this latest class of missionary appointments was the first in which more than half of the new workers are going into areas so dangerous that their names and mission fields could not be released to Baptist Press or other news media.

An IMB-appointed missionary couple with Mississippi ties, already serving on a hostile mission field, recently sent this letter to their correspondents in the U.S. If it sounds like it's coded, that's because it has to be.

Your rememberings are needed as we work together on preparing our covenants of growth... sort of like what many of us know as a strategic plan. While we are in (city withheld), we have more freedoms than elsewhere in our work. However, there are still some things of which you should be aware when communicating with us:

♦ *Consider anything you print to be in the public domain. Any lack of vigilance on our*

part could do untold harm to national Christians and ministries.

♦ *Don't criticize the (country withheld) government in any way. Don't criticize the (dominant religion withheld) in any way.*

♦ *Don't mention missions, missionary activity, giving out Bibles, etc. Refer to missionaries as "our folks."*

♦ *It's a good idea to tape letters after sealing.* Such is the daily routine of many of our Southern Baptist missionaries around the world.

While IMB certainly would not place missionaries in imminent danger, it is telling that there are those among us who are nonetheless willing to put everything on the line to bring a lost world to Christ.

They deserve our prayers. Won't you pray for all our missionaries and especially for those missionaries in the Muslim countries at which the "Thirty Days of Prayer for Muslims in West Africa" is directed? This call to prayer, Dec. 19-Jan. 18, will occur during Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting in which tensions run high in many places hostile to the Gospel.

You can order printed guides for the "Thirty Days of Prayer for Muslims in West Africa," free of charge and in quantity, by calling IMB toll-free at (800) 866-3621. The e-mail address for orders is customer-services@imb.org.

Please do so today. There are several Mississippi Baptists working in some of these very areas of West Africa.

Missionaries deserve our financial sup-

No issue on Dec. 24

Due to postal regulations that limit The Baptist Record to 50 issues per year, the newspaper will not publish on Dec. 24. News items submitted by the deadline of Dec. 17 will appear in the Dec. 31 or Jan. 7 issues of The Baptist Record.

All news items specifically for the issue of Dec. 31 must arrive in the newspaper office by Dec. 17. All advertising specifically for the Dec. 31 and Jan. 7 issues must arrive in the newspaper office by Dec. 17.

For more information, contact The Baptist Record. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

THIRTY DAYS



Prayer for Muslims in West Africa

DEC. 19 — JAN. 18

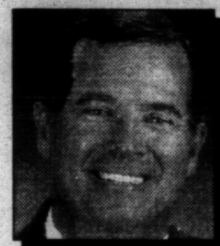
port, too. During this month of emphasis across the Southern Baptist Convention for the greatest missions offering in Christendom — The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions — please give generously toward the record national goal of \$110,000,000.

As we close in on our long-held Bold Mission Thrust dream of 5,000 fully-supported Southern Baptist missionaries in place around the world, increased prayer and financial support are going to become increasingly more crucial.

Each and every missionary and missionary family member deserves our support in every way we can muster from here in our comfortable and secure citadel of Christendom.

After all, they're the ones out there doing the heavy lifting.

PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL



Hurtling toward a new millennium

By Dean Register, president
Mississippi Baptist Convention

I find special encouragement in the realization that God's plans never fail. While I may not understand all the details of his agenda, I can trust that he knows exactly what he is doing.

When our children were small, my wife enjoyed the art of cross stitching. She was weaving a quaint farm house scene one day when she noticed our three-year-old son looking up at her. From his perspective all he could see was the under-neath of threads without any design or reason. "That's yucky, Mom," he exclaimed.

Realizing his limited perspective, my wife turned it over where he could see the pattern of the farm house. Immediately he shouted, "O Mama, that's really pretty!"

Many times we analyze God's design upon our life from an improper perspective. We can't discern his plan. One day, however, he will show us the completed picture and we will realize the intricate pattern of his workmanship.

The future and hope for Mississippi Baptists are grounded in God's desire to bless us and to use us to bless

the world. We have a window of opportunity. God's mandate to us is *carpe momento* — seize the moment. We can accomplish goals together that none of us can accomplish alone.

As the last year of our millennium opens and we count off the days until A.D. 2000, let us make our days count. Let's do something more than turn over a new leaf.

The problem with turning over a new leaf is that after you've done it twice you're back where you started.

God has not called his people to merely turn over a new leaf, but to turn over absolutely everything to him. A leaf is fickle and temporary. His work in the life of Mississippi Baptists is precious and eternal.

We have a gigantic task of reaching our world for Christ, but the Lord our God is greater than all our obstacles. What a mighty God we serve!

Register is pastor of Temple Church, Hattiesburg.

Ex. Comm. gives nod to MBCB staffers

By Tim Nicholas, Director
MBCB Communication Dept.

The executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) on Dec. 8 approved three new employees for Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and filled a position at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian that will become vacant in 1999.

The new WMU employees and their positions are:

- Kathy Burns of Birmingham, Ala., Women on Missions and Women's Ministry.
- Robin Keels of Springfield, Ill., Acteens/GA/Camp Ministries.

- Debbie Sills of Clinton, Mission Friends/Communications consultant.

In addition, Billy Grimes of Long Beach will begin his duties as maintenance supervisor at Gulfshore Assembly early next year.

With the approval of the three new employees, Mississippi WMU director Kay Cassibry reported that she has completed her leadership team. Cassibry has been WMU director since September of this year, when she assumed the office from the retiring Marjean Patterson of Clinton.

Since 1992, Burns has served in a number of positions with the national WMU office in Birmingham, including Mission Friends specialist, preschool consultant, and missions innovator.

She holds a master's of religious education degree with concentration in childhood education from Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth and a bachelor of science in elementary education degree from Samford University in Birmingham. She is a native of Bynum, Ala.

"I believe Kathy's experiences (as a missions innovator) will be a valuable asset to us as we look to find new and cre-

ative ways to involve more of our churches in missions.

"We see a great need to reach out and involve our younger women in Women on Mission. Since most of this age group has preschoolers and children, Kathy's experiences with this age level will help bridge that gap," Cassibry said.

Keels has served as WMU consultant for the Illinois Baptist State Association (1993-present); as Acteens consultant for the South Carolina WMU (1985-93); and as minister of education, youth, and outreach at Calvary Church, Columbia, S.C.

She holds a masters in religious education degree from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and a bachelor of science in special education degree from Winthrop College in Rock Hill, S.C. She is a native of South Carolina.

"It is obvious that her real passion is Acteens and camp. Camp has always been a priority for Mississippi WMU... and I know of no one across our nation who knows and loves camp more than Robin.

"Robin has a missions heart and a desire to be a part of what God is doing in Mississippi. Her years of WMU experience in South Carolina and Illinois will make a strong contribution to our WMU team," Cassibry said.

Sills has served since 1996 as advertising coordinator for The Baptist Record in Jackson. She was also liaison to The Baptist Record Advisory Committee.

She holds a masters of art in religious education degree from Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth and a bachelor of science in psychology degree from North Georgia College in Dahlonega, Ga.

Sills is a native of Kennesaw, Ga. She is married to Rick Sills,

minister of music at Faith Church, Jackson. He is currently studying for a masters of music in applied performance degree at Mississippi College in Clinton.

"Communication is a priority for WMU as we seek to reach our women, children, and preschoolers. Debbie has the talents and experiences to help us, through her knowledge of communications.

Cassibry also told the executive commi-

tee that Fran Pickett has agreed to serve for an as-yet undetermined time as interim director of Camp Garaywa in Clinton.

Pickett worked at Camp Garaywa for more than 20 years, and was director of support services for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board when she retired.

"We are currently seeking someone to

fill the camp manager position, but we felt we needed someone in this position to keep the camp functioning since we continue to have groups on an ongoing basis.

"Fran will help us as we begin a new dimension of our ministry with the addition of Patterson Place," Cassibry said.

Patterson Place is the new lodge currently under construction at Camp Garaywa, designed to accommodate adults for their meetings and retreats at the centrally-located camp in Clinton.

Cassibry also advised the executive committee that Tammy Anderson, currently WMU's Acteens consultant, will have a new assignment titled, Campus Women on Mission/Youth on Mission consultant.

"Tammy has done an out-

standing job as Acteens consultant. We want to bring more emphasis to campus and youth, and Tammy has demonstrated strength in those areas," Cassibry said.

The executive committee also approved the employment of Billy Grimes of Long Beach to replace longtime Gulfshore Assembly maintenance supervisor Freddie Cook, who will retire on April 2 of next year.

Cook has been an MBCB employee for 37 years. Grimes has been installation and maintenance supervisor for Ray C. Weaver Mechanical Contractor since 1989.

Grimes and his wife Barbara have one daughter.



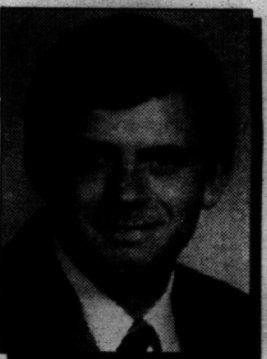
Sills



Keels



Burns



Grimes

In other business, the executive committees:

- approved a proposal from the MBCB business office to allow Cooperative Program-budgeted capital needs expenditures greater than \$2,500 to no longer require additional executive committee approval.

Previously, executive committee approval was required for unplanned or emergency capital needs expenditures.

- Ok'd an update to the standard disclaimer used in the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) Annual that states any listings in the annual do not imply endorsement by MBC.

The full MBCB was assembling for a regularly-scheduled meeting as the newspaper went to press on the morning of Dec. 8.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

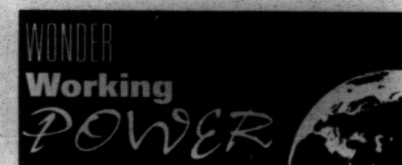
THE BAPTIST Record

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

DECEMBER 10, 1998

VOL. 122

No. 43



Lottie Moon
Christmas Offering for
International Missions

NATIONAL GOAL:

\$110,000,000

Miss CP increases budget lead

Mississippi Baptists gave \$2.1 million through the Cooperative Program (CP) in November, keeping a substantial lead over budget requirements, according to Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which disburses the funds.

The November total was \$2,127,077, which was \$501,457 more than that given in November of 1997.

Total gifts for the first 11 months of 1998 are \$24,135,991 and are \$578,220, or 2.45% more than that given for the same period of 1997.

Giving thus far in 1998 is \$718,267, or 3.07% ahead of the pro rata budget of \$23,417,724. That amount is figured by dividing the total Cooperative Program budget of \$25,546,608 by 12, and multiplying by the number of elapsed months.

This means that December, usually a strong month in giving, only needs \$1,410,617 in gifts to reach the 1998 budget.

The Cooperative Program helps fund the work of six Southern Baptist seminaries, the Baptist Children's Village, and the state Youth Evangelism Conference at Mississippi College, Dec. 28-29.

SBC CP continues increase

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) receipts for November and for the fiscal year both showed increases over the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

For November 1998, the CP receipts totaled \$11,942,959 compared to November 1997 of \$11,869,780, an increase of \$73,178 or .62%.

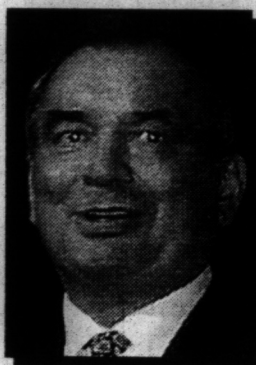
For the SBC fiscal year's first two months — October and November — CP gifts totaled \$27,469,016, an increase of \$2,423,208 or 9.69%, over the previous year's figure of \$25,045,808.

Designated gifts for the month of November totaled \$2,541,504, a decrease of \$540,623 or 17.54%, from the previous year's month of \$3,082,127. For the fiscal year, designated gifts totaled \$4,757,896 compared to the previous year of \$5,046,606, a decrease of \$288,709 or 5.72%.

For the SBC's Program Allocation Budget, after two months, the required figure of \$25,834,287 was surpassed by \$1,634,729 or 6.33%.

Ukrainian leader addresses Mississippians

Edited transcript of address delivered to the Lay Missions Banquet Oct. 26 at First Church, Jackson, by Gregory Komendant, president of the Ukrainian Baptist Union. Interpreted by Victor Kulbich, union vice-president. Mississippi Baptists and Ukrainian Baptists have entered the first year of a three-year partnership.



Komendant

You know the history of our country and most of you, perhaps I can say, all American people, prayed for us. You prayed in the most difficult time for us. You prayed especially for freedom. You prayed for our churches to survive and continue to do the work, and God heard these prayers. Let me say this word of gratitude to you, for everything that happened in our country was an answer to millions and millions of prayers.

I am so grateful that during these three days (in Mississippi) we are able to get to know better our brother convention in Mississippi as well as your leadership and churches which are very close to our hearts.

I now understand better why God so blessed the Mississippi Baptist Convention, because you have a heart for the Lord, a heart for the mission of the Lord, and that it is a very humble heart, and God always blesses humble people.

One-hundred-fifty years ago one of the poorest and most ordinary of people were able to hear the voice of the Lord, and those people followed Jesus, and those people visited other people, and told them about Jesus Christ.

The people gathered together in the market places in Russia, and a very poor and very alone church planter stood out in the center of this place where people trade with one another, and he cried among those people, "I've found it! I've found it! I've found it!"

People came to him and

asked, "What have you found?" He said, "I found Jesus," and he started to read them the Bible. That is how our Baptist movement started. There were no famous people there, just ordinary people who told one another about Jesus Christ.

In our country we experienced a very difficult time, but our people were ready to go, ready to follow Jesus, follow even the very difficult roads.

Thousands of the people have been in prison because of this. Tens of thousands of people were taken to Siberia and died there. Today there is a great growth in the church in Siberia. Our Ukraine missionaries are working in Siberia to plant churches. More than 215 people work in Russia, especially in the places where our fathers and grandfathers died. Following Jesus we need to go to these places, and most of all to the most difficult places.

There were the years before the revolution. There was the communist time, and then it passed. It was a very difficult time. During the 1930s all the churches were closed. It was easy to lie and say "I don't follow Jesus" and live, or say "I follow Jesus," and go to prison. Most of the people made the choice and went to prison to die.

My grandfather died in prison just because he had been a deacon of the church. Victor (Kulbich's) grandfather had been twice in prison. (My wife's) father spent 25 years in prison. To follow Jesus means to go to the most difficult places, but Jesus never left us and he says to each of you, "You go!"

In the most difficult years of the communist (era) we were not able to do any activities. Sometimes people ask us why we have so many sisters in the church and not many brothers. It is because most of the brothers were killed in the 1930s. Then, during the 40s many of

them died in the second world war. That is why we have so many women. Eighty-five percent of the members are sisters.

Today we are experiencing times that our fathers and grandfathers only dreamed about. The Lord changed everything, in days. You cannot imagine how such a power could be broken so quickly. Who could imagine what all 18 million communists would give up in one day?

I remember in 1991 when Billy Graham came to our country and he came with Mr. Gorbachev. During one hour we had a discussion. Billy Graham shared his personal testimony. He told Mr. Gorbachev about Jesus Christ. Then Gorbachev said, "We need such a preacher here in Moscow. Moscow needs the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

(Graham) was able to have a crusade right in Moscow, preaching to thousands. Before that most of the people said Billy Graham will never preach in Moscow, but it was made possible because God opened the doors and all glory belongs to him.

No one person was able to do that. Yes, he used Gorbachev, but God made it happen because only he has such a power and he calls each of us, "You follow me. Follow me, and I will open the door and no one can close it because I receive all powers."

We have open doors, but we realize within these open doors that we are so weak and so small. That is why we are so glad to have you, our brothers, and would like to see more and more people come, because the door is open.

Who will come? Who will be first, Mormons or Baptists? The Jehovah's Witnesses or the evangelical churches?

Each year we are planting 150 churches in Ukraine. Each year we will touch more than 10,000 people, but there must be more people on mission. More than 20,000 villages and towns

and other places where people live are without an evangelical witness. People are waiting for us, and we are ready to go, but we would like to walk together.

I would like to tell everyone who already visited Ukraine of our great appreciation. Those who lead — missionaries like Dale Ledbetter and others, who left the beautiful U.S., very comfortable homes, and came to live among us — it is a testimony because Jesus called.

Today Jesus visits the Ukraine, and he warns us that there are millions of people waiting for the Gospel. I ask you: Lift up your eyes. We need to lift up our eyes and see the reality of the harvest, millions of people who do not know Jesus Christ.

Don't falter. Sometimes we are tempted to stay in our comfortable places. We would like to avoid the difficulties. I remember a legend written in this book. When Peter was ready to leave Jerusalem, he was ready to leave all the difficulties that had been there. Jesus met him, and Peter asked him one question: "Where are you going?" Jesus said, "I'm going to Jerusalem; I go again to be crucified." This vision gave Peter the power to come back to Jerusalem and work hard for him and die for him.

Jesus calls. Today is a great opportunity for all of us. Ukraine is not just Ukrainians. In Ukraine we have 100 different nationalities. We have the Italian church, Romanian, Bulgarian, Coptic churches, and many other nationalities, and we can do a lot of things together.

Thank you, thank you for all Baptists of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and I believe that many of you will be moved by God to come to Ukraine.

Never have we had such a great opportunity as today, and we do not know for how long. God will give us. God says: today, our call to missions is to follow Jesus. He knows where we need to go.

May God bless all of you.

Dental clinic equipment needed in Honduras

A dentist in Honduras, who accompanies many medical/dental teams, is attempting to equip a clinic in Curaren in order to minister to the poor. She is looking for used equipment.

The Partnership Missions office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board is attempting to gather the equipment for the dentist.

For more information or for a list of the needed items call the Partnership Missions office toll-free at (800) 748-1651, ext. 398, or toll (601) 292-3398.

Guatemalans seek radio assistance

The K'ekchi' Baptist Association in Guatemala has asked the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) for assistance in locating a missions-minded Christian with a knowledge of radio technology who is interested in using that knowledge in a missionary setting with hard-to-reach Guatemalan villages. For more information, contact IMB toll-free at (800) 999-3113; ext. 1377, or send e-mail message to ksorrell@guate.net

Sunday School writers set for upcoming quarter

Three new Sunday School writers began classes last week in the Baptist Sunday School Writers' Institute. The institute is a three-day course designed to help Sunday School teachers and writers improve their skills. The course is held at the Baptist Sunday School Writers' Institute in the Rawls Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi.



McDermitt

Dee McDermitt, a member of Rawls Baptist Church, where she previously served as church secretary, is one of the new writers. She is currently a member of the Rawls Baptist Church. She is a graduate of the University of Mississippi in Hattiesburg and worked a number of years as a public school teacher. She has been active in her local church as both the Discipleship Training director and as a Sunday School teacher.



Plunkett

Plunkett is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and is currently a member of the Rawls Baptist Church. She is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and is currently a member of the Rawls Baptist Church.

After serving in Mississippi for 15 years, the Jackson native came to the Baptist Record as associate editor in 1994. He and his wife Frances and their three teenage children make their home in Clanton, where they are members of First Church, Clanton. The editor of the Life and Work magazine is Hugh Plunkett, a member of the Rawls Baptist Church. Plunkett is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and is currently a member of the Rawls Baptist Church.

Plunkett is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and is currently a member of the Rawls Baptist Church. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and is currently a member of the Rawls Baptist Church.

Plunkett is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and is currently a member of the Rawls Baptist Church. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and is currently a member of the Rawls Baptist Church.

BF&M change debated in Texas newspaper

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Two familiar names related to Southwestern Seminary were juxtaposed against each other in columns penned for the Fort Worth (Texas) Star-Telegram on the issue of faculty members signing anew the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) revised confessional statement.

Columns by Tommy Lea, dean of Southwestern's school of theology, and Russell H. Dilday, former seminary president and current president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, squared off

on the SBC's Baptist Faith and Message confessional statement as revised to include an article on the family during convention sessions last June in Salt Lake City.

Lea wrote in support of the seminary's request for faculty members to sign the revised statement while Dilday listed several objections to both the adoption of the amendment and the seminary's expectation of its faculty.

Lea, in his column, stated the reason Southwestern is asking the faculty to sign the revised Baptist Faith and Message is

because the seminary "is owned by the Southern Baptist Convention and gladly remains under the general direction and control of the convention."

Since Southwestern is a "confessional institution," Lea wrote, "all who teach at our school subscribe to a confession of faith and agree to teach by it," according to the seminary's charter.

Addressing the famous New Testament passage in Ephesians 5 undergirding the Baptist Faith and Message's new family article, Lea noted, "Its purpose is to call both husband and wife to live as servants under the same roof."

The Ephesians passage "should not be used by an abusive husband to force a wife into line," Lea wrote. "It is not to be used by a self-centered wife to justify getting her own ways or wishes in a marital argument."

Dilday's four main objections were based on what he called "balance," "questionable biblical interpretation," "ethical and legal issues" and "Pandora's box concerns."

He wrote that Pandora's box is now open on other "secondary theological issues" being added to the SBC's confession of faith.

Jim Jones, Fort Worth Star-Telegram religion editor, reported on some of the same objections in his weekly column Oct. 31. Jones interviewed two professors, among Southwestern's 90 full-time faculty, who have announced they will not sign the revised Baptist Faith and Message.

Dan G. Kent, professor of Old Testament, said he will retire next June, while Alan Brehm, assistant professor of New Testament, said he has submitted his resignation. Each professor voiced objections similar to Dilday's.

Anthony Jordan, chairman of the Baptist Faith and Message study committee and executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, noted that objectors claim "the Baptist Faith and Message must never be a creed, but then they turn around and argue that you should never tamper with it."

Homosexuality resolution, media rebuke OK'd by evangelical theologians' group

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — A resolution declaring homosexual activity to be contrary to the Bible — and rebuking the national media for "unsubstantiated, untruthful, and hateful accusations against evangelical Christians" — was overwhelmingly adopted by the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) during its 50th annual meeting Nov. 19-21 in Orlando, Fla.

The 2,500-member society is the world's largest association of evangelical professors of theology. Its membership includes professors of Bible and theology from every evangelical denomination and every evangelical college and seminary in the United States as well as many members from Canada and Europe. A record 1,296 registrants attended the three-day meeting.

Wayne Grudem, newly elected ETS president and professor and chairman of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School's department of biblical and systematic theology, Deerfield, Ill., said the society "has only rarely adopted positions on questions of national concern in the past, but this situation transcends denominational and political differences among our members."

The resolution begins by noting "the heinous beating death of Matthew Shepard," a homosexual student in Laramie, Wyo., earlier this year. The ETS said, "we affirm as biblical and do ourselves agree with the position that Christian moral opposition to homosexual behavior is not and can never be license for anyone to engage in any form of slander, harassment or violence against one with whom we disagree."

The ETS also noted: "... advocates for the social normalization of homosexual behavior have laid the blame for hate crimes on the moral witness of the Church and God's gracious offer of forgiveness to repentant sinners ..."

The society challenged "using the rhetoric of hate to prejudice the power of civil government against the open and complete proclamation of moral standards revealed in God's Holy Word — including both God's love for sinners as well as his judgment of sin."

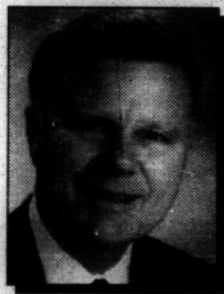
Grudem said he hopes the ETS resolution will "give courage to the churches in all evangelical denominations to hold firm to the clear teaching of Scripture on moral right and wrong and on forgiveness and power to change through Jesus Christ."

In the 1950s, the number one rated television show in America was I Love Lucy. For those of you who are old enough to remember or for those of you who have watched reruns on Nickelodeon, you can't help but be delighted over and over at the wisecracks and comedy routines of Lucille Ball. It is a kind of comedy with the qualities that endure.

More enduring than the "funny" of Lucy is the eternal impact of Lottie. Lottie Moon was a giant of a person. Although I am confident she would be shocked if she knew that her name was spread everywhere and her picture appeared repeatedly in literature, she is worthy of Southern Baptists' largest missions offering bearing her name.

Living in a world where money was scarce, transportation difficult, correspondence painfully slow, fellow missionaries almost non-existent, and the work almost impossible, she refused to let go of the souls of China and she refused to give up on the mission hearts of Southern Baptists.

This courageous little lady, for whom our international missions offering is named, set sail



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

for China in 1873, leaving a life of comfort and ease in Virginia to follow her heart's conviction that God wanted her to go to China. She went with no guarantee of support or encouragement other than the promise that the Lord would be with her.

For 40 years she served our Lord Jesus and loved the people of China. In those 40 years she returned to the United States only three times. Repeatedly passing over furloughs, she stayed with her task in China. After her final return to China, she never made it back to her homeland.

Having literally given herself to the Lord for the sake of the Gospel, she died from exhaustion and starvation on Christmas Eve 1912.

Three words on her grave marker rightly and completely

tell the story of her commitment to Christ: "Faithful Unto Death."

Her death aboard a ship in Kobe, Japan, did not send shock waves across the world but I'm confident her death had the attention of Heaven!

Now, so many years later, she "being dead yet speaketh."

A world to be reached was not only heavy on her heart, but she made sure the world would be also laid on the heart of Mississippi and Southern Baptists. She called her fellow Christians to prayer, she called them to give, and she called them to open their hearts to be willing to go.

Today hundreds and possibly thousands of missionaries have responded, prepared, and gone because of the call that has been personalized from the Lord himself to respond and

share the good news of Jesus.

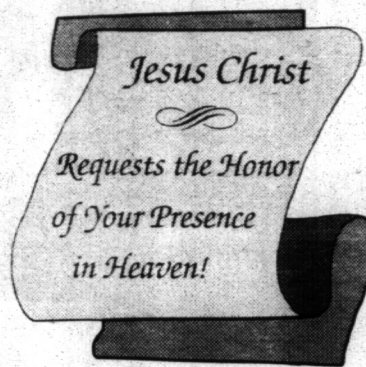
Little did I realize what an impact Lottie would have on my life, and I am convinced that she had no idea of the lives that she touched not only in China but in the generations that would follow all across America.

Mississippians have sent their sons and daughters to every corner of the globe in the name of Jesus.

Last year, Mississippians gave the largest amount of money in their history through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. Last year, more than one of every ten dollars given to international missions through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering was a Mississippi dollar.

To say that Mississippi Baptists love Lottie is true, but to say that Mississippi Baptists love a world that needs Jesus is more accurate — and to say that Mississippi Baptists love the Lord who has called us to pray, to go, and to give, is right on target.

May God bless you this Christmas, as you not only remember yourself and what you are going to get for Christmas, but also as you remember our Lord and what you can give for Christmas.



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death.
(I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Spring Hill Church, Lafayette-Marshall Association, recently ordained Shannon Turner and Joe Butler as deacons. Pictured (from left) are Turner; Larry Dukes, pastor; and Butler.

Beth B. Bounds was honored on Aug. 30 by members of DeKalb Church, DeKalb, for her 50 years of service to her church. She began playing the piano for the church in 1948. She is the only church organist DeKalb Church as ever had. She began playing for church services at the age of 12 in Kemper Association when she was voted the church pianist at Scooba Church. She also played briefly at West Kemper Church. Bounds received a gift from the church presented



Allan and Bounds

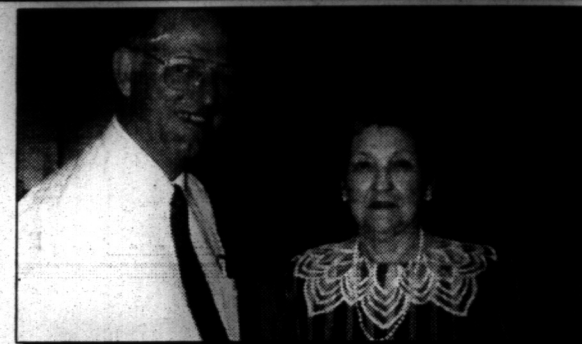
by Gilbert Allan, pastor, following a tribute by John Parker Stokes. After the service, Bounds was honored by the members of the church with a covered dish luncheon.

Whit Holmes, a native of Guilford, was elected president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention's Executive Board at this year's annual state convention. Holmes has been pastor of Hebron Church, Denham Springs, La., for six years. He also served as pastor of Perkinson Church, Perkinson, for four years.

Walter Sellers (right) was ordained as a deacon by New Life Church, Leaf, on Oct. 11. Jerry Rawls (left) pastor, presented Sellers with a certificate of ordination.



Rawls and Sellers



Holly Springs Church, Lincoln County, honored Sara Emma Breaux for four years of perfect attendance. Pictured with Breaux is Glenn McInnis, pastor.

Tylertown Church, Tylertown, on Sunday, Oct. 18 recognized Uta Grubbs for 50 years of service playing the piano or organ. She received a gift from the church and was presented a certificate from the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Pictured with Grubbs is Kenny Adams, minister of music.



Grubbs and Adams

Revival dates

Bethlehem, Laurel: Dec. 13-16; Sunday services, 6:15 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jon Randles, who is a speaker for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, will be the evangelist; for more information, call (601) 428-4462.

Steeple & Baptistries

From the world's largest manufacturer of fiberglass church products

Call or write for our free catalog

- Steeples
- Baptistries
- Lighted Wall Crosses
- Krinkiglas® Windows
- Baptistries Heaters

800-527-1459
PO Box 1340
Henderson, TX 75653-1340

FIBERGLASS SPECIALTIES INCORPORATED

A free specialized review of your church insurance?

IT COULD BE PRICELESS.

Every Southern Baptist church is different — including yours. The only way to truly know if you're getting the best insurance value is an on-site analysis by someone specializing in church insurance. Church Mutual has specialized in insuring churches for over 100 years. Today, we protect more churches than any other insurance company in America. And we offer an on-site insurance analysis of your church absolutely free. Find out if you're getting the best insurance for your money.

Call Church Mutual: The Specialist®
800-554-2642



© 1998 Church Mutual Insurance Company

IT ALL BEGAN IN
THE MANGER
OVER 2,000 YEARS AGO.
TODAY, THE PROPHECIES
CONTINUE TO UNFOLD...

HOW MANY ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST WILL GET LEFT BEHIND?

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON
THE FUTURE IS CLEAR™

BOOK 5, APOCALYPSE IS COMING! FEBRUARY, 1999

leftbehind.com

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

December 10, 1998

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS ANNUAL CONFERENCE



Steven Lewis
Oklahoma City
Attorney
Church Law Leader

February 11, 1999

BROADMOOR BAPTIST CHURCH

787 East Northside Drive
Jackson



Bruce Sides
Dallas
Region 3 Director
Annuity Board

Church Business Administrators Conference - Registration Form

February 11, 1999

Broadmoor Baptist Church

Cost: \$10 (includes materials and lunch at the church)

Name _____ Church _____

Address _____ City/State _____ Zip _____

Association _____ Position _____

Telephone No. _____ \$10 Registration Fee included: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Clip and return to:

Matt Buckles, CAPM Dept., P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

This conference is jointly sponsored by the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, MBCB and Metro Baptist Association.

Salary and annuity consultations can be made with Bruce Sides and Robin Nichols (MBCB) at the conference.

For further information, contact: Matt Buckles, 800-748-1651 (in Jackson, 968-3800); or Larry Garner, Metro Baptist Association, 362-8676.

1999 Deacon Ministry Emphasis



Deacon Ministry Emphasis . . . is a plan with specific actions that highlights deacon ministries and involves deacon training and service.

The Purpose Of Deacon Emphasis Is To:

- Focus on their biblical role
- Build team relationships
- Secure involvement in ministries
- Develop skills for ministry

Deacon Emphasis Week is scheduled for January 10-17, 1999, but a deacon ministry emphasis may be conducted at any time during the year.

For information, contact:

Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department
Matt Buckles, consultant
P O Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530
(601)968-3800, extension 307, or 1-800-748-1651



Christian Performing Arts Festival

*with Church
Recreation and Youth
Leader Conferences*

March 26-27, 1999
**Morrison Heights
Baptist Church**
Clinton • Cost \$20

For more information, contact
Discipleship & Family Ministry Department
(601)968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference

"CELEBRATE JESUS"

January 18-19, 1999
Crossgates Baptist Church

*Conference begins at 1:30 p.m.
on Monday, January 18 and
concludes at 9 p.m., Tuesday.*



Progress on Patterson Place

Where is Patterson Place? Patterson Place is rising from its foundation on a small hill at Camp Garaywa in Clinton.

What kind of place is Patterson Place? Patterson Place is a self-contained lodge-type conference center to be used by adults.

Why will it be used only by adults? Because Camp Garaywa already has in place facilities built for youth and children.

Why is a center for adults needed at a youth and children's camp? Because, since Garaywa's very first year, 1947, adults have been meeting there.

So, why, fifty years later, did someone decide it should be built now? For a long time it has been a dream of WMU leaders to provide such an adult setting; it seemed to state WMU leadership that beginning the process in 1997 would be a fine way to celebrate the 50th anniversary year of Camp Garaywa.

Where in the world did the name Camp Garaywa come from? It is a composite of the names of the WMU missions education organizations in 1947 - GA, RA, YWA

Where in the world did the name Patterson Place come from? The Executive Board of Mississippi WMU chose it in honor of Marjean Patterson, former executive director of Mississippi WMU, who retired at the end of August, 1997, after serving in various positions with Mississippi WMU for more than forty-one years.

How big is Patterson Place? Two stories tall, 30 spacious rooms, meeting space for 100 people; food service area, screened second-floor porch with rocking chairs, balconies, ample parking, handicapped accessible rooms, beautiful wooded surroundings.

Who will be allowed to use it? Baptist adult groups will have first claim. These may be WMU groups, men's groups, church staff groups for planning retreats, choir retreats, deacon-wives retreat, associational groups, Baptist Building groups, any Baptist group needing a place for a spiritually-oriented gathering. Groups outside the Baptist denomination will be able to use it in accordance with policy of Mississippi WMU, which operates within the policy of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

What is Patterson Place costing? Approximately one-and-a-half million dollars, furnished.

What is the current dream of Mississippi WMU? That Patterson Place will be debt-free by dedication.

When is dedication? March 15, 1999, at ten in the morning, the first day of the Mississippi WMU Annual Meeting.

How much money do Mississippi Baptists need to give now to make this dream come true? The goal for our final fund-raising effort is \$450,000.

How may people send gifts? Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Post Office Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. Designate "Camp Garaywa Fund."

Are there any materials available to promote this in my church? Yes, there is a lovely color brochure and a video. You may get information about these by calling the WMU Office at the Baptist Building.

When may reservations be made to use Patterson Place? You may call the WMU office at the Baptist Building for information on this procedure.



'99 Senior Adult Retreats at Gulfshore "The Joyful Heart of a Senior"

Senior Adult Retreat I May 17-19



Preacher:
Garland McKee
Clinton

Choir:
FBC
Jackson

Senior Adult Retreat II May 20-22



Preacher:
Cliff Perkins
Clinton

Choir:
FBC
Laurel

Senior Adult Retreat III May 24-28



Preacher:
C. Ferris Jordan
Baton Rouge, La.

Choir:
North Oxford BC
Oxford



Two great MUSIC CAMPS for older children in '99



GULFSHORE BAPTIST ASSEMBLY JUNE 29 - JULY 3

Conference Clinician: Don Odom
Associate professor of voice
Florida Baptist Theological College
Graceville, Fla.
Accommodates 500 — Cost \$128.50 each



BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE JULY 26 - JULY 30

Conference Clinician: Kay Payton
Texas state music specialist
First Baptist Church
Round Rock, Tex.
Accommodates 135 — Cost \$100.00 each

Both camps feature

- ♪ Worship Services
- ♪ Music Classes
- ♪ Crafts
- ♪ Water Games
- ♪ Concert on Final Evening
- ♪ Spiritual Emphasis Classes
- ♪ Swimming
- ♪ Ping-Pong Tournaments
- ♪ Many Other Fun Activities

Sponsored by the Church Music Department, MBCB
Call 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651 for more information

FAMILY CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

A guide for family devotions



Hope

Second Sunday Before Christmas - December 13

Wreath. If using a wreath, light the two previously lit candles, and also a third purple one.

Read. Have a family member read Isaiah 11:1-2.

What a precious promise! From the line of Jesse, father of King David, would come a man who would reign in righteousness over David's kingdom forever!

God had promised David that his kingdom would last forever. As the years passed and the earthly kingdom crumbled, people wondered how this promise would be fulfilled.

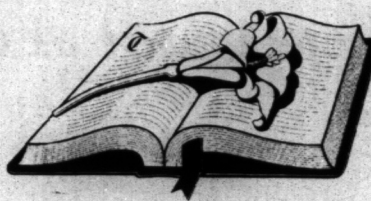
God's people of faith never gave up hope that some day God would raise up His Chosen One, or Christ, from among the descendants of David. He would be perfect in wisdom and understanding, and be full of the Spirit of the Lord.

Read. Have someone read Acts 13:23. If you have time, read all of Acts 13:16-39. It gives a clear description of God's work throughout history to bring about our salvation.

Make. Some families enjoy making a small "Jesse Tree" with Christian ornaments in white and gold, to remind us of the prophesy of Jesus' birth. Make a Jesse branch to place on your mantel or table. Place gold and white ribbons or bows on an evergreen branch. Gold denotes kingship and white stands for purity.

Sing a Christmas hymn of hope, perhaps "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

Pray, thanking God for the hope of salvation that is ours in Christ Jesus.



Peace

Last Sunday Before Christmas - December 20

Wreath. If using a wreath, light the three previously lit candles. Light either the fourth purple candle or the pink one, depending on which your family chose to have.

Read. Have a family member read Isaiah 11:5-10.

Our world is desperately in search of peace. A look at the newspaper headlines almost any day will reveal talk of wars, terrorists, crime, violence, acts of cruelty.

We also long for inner peace. People try various means of feeling "complete," yet loneliness and depression are almost epidemic. What is the answer to all these problems?

Read. Ask someone to read John 14:27.

What a precious promise! Jesus' gift of peace is ours for the asking; not earthly, temporal peace, which can and does come and go with changing times, but internal peace, which can give us strength and courage when we keep our eyes on Him.

No, our world does not resemble the description in Isaiah 11. That is a picture of Christ's future kingdom, to which we look forward with hope. But the Prince of Peace does reign in the hearts of believers now, and He has promised to be with us forever. That is truly something to celebrate!

Make. Help young children mold out of clay or Play-Doh the animals mentioned in these verses. Talk about how impossible it would be for all these things to happen if it were not for a special miracle from God. That miracle is the Baby whose birth we anticipate!

Sing a Christmas hymn of peace, perhaps "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

Pray, thanking God for His gift of the Prince of Peace.



Joy

Christmas Eve or Christmas Day

Wreath. If using a wreath, light all four previously lit candles and also the white, or "Christ," candle in the center. Read Isaiah 7:14.

What an impossible prediction! What was Isaiah thinking? Surely this prophecy could only have come from God.

Read. Have a family member read Luke 1:26-33.

God is so faithful in keeping His promises! He chose a young virgin named Mary, a descendant of David, to be the one through whom His Word entered the world. (Mary's espoused husband, Joseph, who would be the baby's legal father, was also a descendant of David.)

Many people through the years have tried to imagine what must have gone through Mary's mind upon hearing the angel's amazing proclamation. I think she must have remembered the words of the prophet Isaiah. This Child was to be the Immanuel, the God With Us!

Gabriel's message was unmistakable. This Child, whom she was to name Jesus (God is Salvation!), was the long-awaited Messiah who would save His people from their sins and rule over His kingdom forever!

Mary's response was one of pure faith. She trusted in the goodness of God and was willing to do what was necessary in order to obey Him.

That is the response God asks from each of us. Whatever task He has given us, we are to embrace it with pure faith and obey with cheerful readiness. That is not always easy! Remembering God's faithfulness in keeping His promises should give us the courage to follow where He leads. God is still faithful!

Draw. Young children can use this time to draw or paint a picture of the Baby Jesus with Mary and Joseph. You may want to let them use glitter to make the picture extra special. Show the picture to friends and family you see today. Let your children explain why Christmas is so special!

Sing lots of Christmas hymns, including "What Child Is This?"

Pray, thanking God for the joy of Christmas.

**Please note
date changes!**



1999 Mississippi Marriage Enrichment Opportunities

Main Street, Hattiesburg -- March 12 & 13
Gary Chapman, author of *Five Love Languages*
(call David Rogers -- 601-544-5444)

FBC, Tupelo -- March 19 & 20
Bob & Yvonne Turnbull, authors of *Marriage Mentors*
(call Mike Hatfield -- 601-842-4947)

FBC, Jackson -- November 5 & 6
Gary Smalley, author of *Making Love Last Forever*
(call Ronnie Falvey -- 601-949-1993)

1999 Family Week at Gulfshore - July 5-9
"Developing the Family Foundation"

1999 Senior Adult Retreats at Gulfshore
May 17-19, 20-22, 24-28
"The Joyful Heart of a Senior"

1999 State Singles Retreat at Gulfshore
May 29-31
"Cross-Country Training for 21st Century"

Pray this day for...

December 11, 1998-January 6, 1999

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

"You cannot estimate prayer-power. Prayer is as vast as God because He is behind it.

Seven days without prayer makes one weak!"

Anonymous

One million written responses and 190 new churches started following a Christian TV series in Russia, according to a Christian Broadcasting Network report. The series started in 1991, and was broadcast by the Soviet Central Television. Pray for the organized evangelistic follow-up teams in the areas with the most responses.

The 65,000 Bru people of Laos are an unreached people group that are beginning to respond to the gospel. The growth of the Church has alarmed Laotian authorities, and 100 Christian Bru families have been ordered to renounce their faith or be evicted from their homes, and possibly the country. Pray for their physical and spiritual preservation.

In Myanmar (formerly Burma) a monk from a strongly Buddhist people group was converted to Christianity, and 17 of his family members also became believers. Now he has been commissioned by a local church to evangelize in another region where 100,000 of his people live. Pray for a spiritual harvest among this people group.

Pray that more young people in Singapore will commit themselves to full-time Christian service. Young believers are prone to look for business or professional opportunities and neglect service for God.

Praise God! A couple has given their hearts to the Lord after the wife was healed from being paralyzed for seventeen years. After hearing the Gospel from neighbors, they believed in Jesus. Later after prayer for the healing, she was completely healed. Now the man and his wife are leaders of two growing house churches in that country.

The mission at Tocolotlan, Mexico, is meeting in a structure that is falling down. The student pastor shared that every year they win one person to Christ for every member in the church. Half of those follow through with baptism. Pray that God will provide adequate space and that many will continue to come to Christ through this ministry.

For the Youth Evangelism Conference: Mississippi College; 2pm, 28th 3pm, 129th sponsored by the Evangelism Dept.

The first Bible press for North India was inaugurated in October. This press will produce 2 million Bibles per year and will focus on the languages of unreached peoples in South Asia. Pray that it will be fully functional by the beginning of 1999.

Missionaries Mark and Pam Best ask you to pray for their family in language school in Costa Rica. Family health needs have interfered with language classes. Please pray that the rest of their time in Costa Rica will be positive and will prepare them for ministry in Guatemala.

Richard Logsdon is associational missionary for Potomac Baptist Association in Waldorf, MD. Pray for First Baptist Church of Waldorf, which is trying to get a building permit to build an educational wing, and for Maryland Point Baptist Church, which has been trying to get a permit for three years.

Please continue praying for the new discipleship program of "Church B" in Mongolia. Pray that the members will learn how to witness to the lost in the community around them.

Joy Turner works with international ministries in Honolulu, Hawaii. Pray for her and others as they build relationships with international students. They are always looking for ways to share Christ. They are also praying for an awakening among the internationals.

A couple living in Tres Cantos, Spain, recently lost a child. They are not believers, but are open to the gospel. Pray for Baptist representatives Chris and Monica Mills as they visit with this couple and share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Missionary Sam Jones reports that the church in Nueva Esperanza, Honduras, where "more than three times the previous number of people showed up for the viewing of the 'Jesus' film and stood for two hours, watching the life of Jesus," was swept off the mountain-side. Pray for these brothers and sisters as they begin to re-build.

The sun shines intensely in Meinung, Taiwan, and people go to great lengths to hide from its powerful rays. Umbrellas, hats, long sleeves, sunglasses, and face masks act as barriers. There are also barriers to the Son. Ancestor worship, idolatry, materialism and demons go to great lengths to shield Halka people from the powerful effects of the Son of God. Pray that the Son's power will penetrate all barriers.

Mississippi WMU's campaign logo while constructing Patterson Place (a 30 room motel type building at Garaywa) is: "Hand in Hand, Garaywa Expands, honoring our heritage, lengthening our legacy, Debt-free by dedication." Pray that the \$450,000 needed will be given by March 15th, the first day of the annual WMU meeting.

Baptist representatives Barry and Sheri Thompson have a burden for ministering to the "marriage needs" they find all around them in Bordeaux, France. Pray that God will direct them in the development of a marriage seminar that can be used both in French and in English.

Please pray for Baptist representatives Bob and Gail Gierhart and Tony and Marsha Woods as they work with churches in Australia that are trying to reach the large Japanese population there for Christ.

Pray for God's leadership as believers in the town of Gunes, Argentina, look for a meeting facility that will be adequate in size but will not strain the resources of this growing congregation.

11 In late November mobs rampaged through a large part of northern Jakarta burning at least seven churches and damaging at least six churches. Continue to pray for Jakarta and all of Indonesia. Pray that Christians will be brave and faithful to proclaim the gospel.

12 Pray for the 90 new missionaries appointed Nov. 17 by the IMB at the Fla. Baptist Convention, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. This pushed the IMB's total number of missionaries to 4,523. The Jerry Rankins only daughter and son-in-law were in the group of 90.

A new president of the Taejon Baptist Theological Seminary was installed on Nov. 26. Pray for him as he leads in the education of Baptist young people in Korea who have felt God's call to many areas of ministry and missions.

Christmas Day, Pray for a retreat in Dallas, TX, Dec. 25-30, for Chinese Christians. Around 300 Chinese from all over the United States plan to attend the retreat. Four from the Chinese Christian Fellowship, FBC, Jackson, have registered to attend.

New Year's Day - Pray that 1999 will be a year of peace and that our country will experience revival and return to God.

The Christians in the Baptist Churches in Angola continue to serve God faithfully each day. Working together voluntarily, their cooperative efforts have resulted in the Baptist Convention of Angola. Pray for the leadership of the Convention, of the Associations and of the churches.

Thank you for praying for Baptist representatives Mark and Vesta Sauter who have been learning not one, but two languages: Czech and Czech Sign Language. Give thanks to God that they have reached a level of competency and will now be able to begin full-time ministry among the deaf communities of the Czech Republic.

A Dominican Baptist partner is working with missionaries on an outreach team. He is ministering at five different mission sites and does much traveling. Pray that God will provide safety for him and for his family while he is away from home.

FEBRUARY



3-84 MR. DAVID COLLINS
3400 Raleigh Street, Hollywood, FL 33021
Parents: Charles & Suzanne, General Evangelism
SERVE IN CARIBBEAN BAPT. COMMUNICATION MISSION

4-85 MR. DAVID JOHNSTON
Caixa Postal 2053 Jockey, 64.049-970 Teresina, PI, BRAZIL
Parents: Vincent & Sharon, Conference/Encampment

7-85 MR. ADRIAN G. MARTIN
C.C. 637, 5500 Mendoza, ARGENTINA
Parents: Asbury & Hope, General Evangelism

8-97 MISS MARIANNA MOSS
Str. Barbu Urleanu Nr. 18, Et.2, Apt. 5, Sector 5, Bucuresti, ROMANIA
Parents: Clay & Vicky, Volunteer Coordinator

10-84 MISS LINDSAY HEARN
BP 1353, Lome, TOGO
Parents: James & Brenda, General Evangelism

15-81 MR. AARON MASSEY
438 E First Street, Forest, MS 39074
Parents: Gregory & Karen, Music Promotion
SERVE IN ARGENTINA

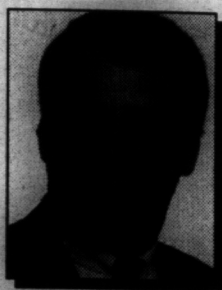
15-79 MISS DEEANN BOOTH
233 Stonecastle Drive, Brandon, MS 39042-8072
Parents: Jim & Edith Ann, Language Pastor (Deaf)

21-90 WILLIAM HUTCHINSON
B.P. 8417 Yoff, Dakar, Senegal, WEST AFRICA
Parents: Michael & Lynn, Church Planters

HOUSE TOPS

STAFF CHANGES

Wyatte Church, Wyatte, has called Gary Higginbotham as pastor. A native of Itta Bena, Higginbotham received his education at Mississippi State University and Mid-America Seminary. His previous place of service was Fulton Church,



Higginbotham

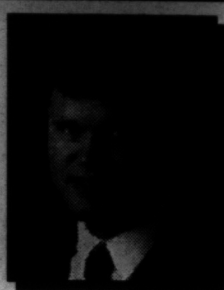
Henning, Tenn. Since Higginbotham was called in May, the membership of the church has expanded by 47 professions of faith and 46 baptisms with an additional 13 professions of faith from its new outreach program.

Clear Creek Church, Shubuta, has called Kevin D. Parker as pastor. A native of Bay Springs, Parker received his education at Jones Jr. College and New Orleans Seminary. He previously

served at Hickory Grove, Silas, Ala., and Rocky Hill, Magee.

Calvary Church, New Augusta, recently called

Tony Stroud as pastor. He is a native of Perry County. His previous place of service was Avera Church, Greene County.



Parker

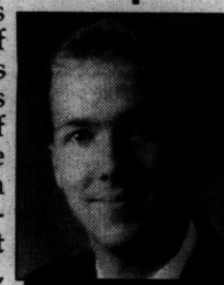
Macedonia Church, Louisville, has called R. A. (Jack) Manor Jr., as pastor. He received his education at Mississippi State University and is now receiving courses through New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Darlove Church, Hollandale.

South McComb, McComb, has called Ted Bowlin as pastor and Lynn McInnis as minister to students. Bowlin is a native of Brookhaven. His previous place of service was Carmel Church, Monticello. McInnis previously served at Temple Church, Hattiesburg.

Raymond Road Church, Jackson, has called Kathy Goss as minister to children, effective Nov. 1. She is a native of Biloxi and a graduate of William Carey College.

Pelahatchie Church, Pelahatchie, has called Keith Ramage as minister of youth and education effective Oct. 25. A native of Houston, Ramage received his education from William Carey College and plans to enter New Orleans Seminary in January of 1999. His previous place of service was First Church, Oloh.

First Church, Summit, has called Doug Spires as associate pastor of music/senior adults effective Oct. 18. Spires is a graduate of Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary. He previously served at First Church, Bay City, Texas.



Spires

Keyboard Fests deadline looms

The registration deadline for participating in the Mississippi Baptist Area Keyboard Festivals across the state on Jan. 28-30 is Tuesday, Dec. 15 according to Dot Pray, keyboard consultant in the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

For more information, contact the Church Music Department at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Staying Well

Living With Diabetes

Kelly Logan is an active high school senior who is looking forward to graduation and college. She is also a diabetic. Diagnosed with juvenile diabetes at 11 months of age, Kelly has grown up acutely aware of the need to eat right, check her blood sugar regularly, and take regular doses of insulin. She's not alone.

Kelly is one of millions of Americans battling diabetes, a condition in which the body's immune system turns on itself and destroys the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. Recent studies have shown that Mississippians are especially prone to this disease which, if left untreated, can cause blindness, heart attack, stroke, kidney failure and loss of limbs.

But there is hope and help for diabetics. Through early detection and treatment, many of the effects of diabetes can be countered. Know the symptoms — extreme thirst; frequent urination; unexplained weight loss; blurred vision and unusual tiredness or drowsiness. Know the factors which increase your risk — obesity; being Black, Hispanic or American Indian; being over 40; or having a family history of diabetes. If you have the symptoms, or are at risk, a physician or diabetes specialist can help you determine whether you have diabetes. The staff of Baptist Diabetes Services is also available with advice and treatment options.

Kelly has a message for those who are diagnosed with diabetes: accept it and get on with your life. "Don't let it get you down or get the best of you," she says. "Realize that you're not the only one who has it. It's nothing to be ashamed of. It's difficult, but it hasn't stopped me yet."

Like Kelly, you can live with diabetes. For more information, call the number below.

Understanding the Benefits of Diabetes Education

For more information, call 1-800-948-6262.

Baptist
HEALTH SYSTEMS

CHURCH PEWS & FURNITURE CO.



★ Cushions ★ Baptisries
★ Steeples ★ Renovation
★ Pews and Pulpit
Furniture
(New and Used)

Wallace E. Foy

WATTS 1-800-898-0551
Jackson 957-3762

Offering goal surpassed

First Church, Terry, exceeded its goal of \$2,000 for the Margaret Lackey Offering by giving a final total of \$2,869.40. John H. Pace Jr. is pastor.

DIRECTOR TRADE SALES AND MARKETING

LifeWay Christian Resources (formerly Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) is seeking a senior level person to assume direction of the trade sales department. This involves responsibility for all sales (mass market, field, telephone, national accounts), forecasting, and marketing of all Broadman and Holman products. Responsible for financial accountability and management of all department personnel.

WE NEED:

- BS/BA in marketing or management.
- 8+ years experience in marketing/sales mgt. to wholesale customers.
- Desire experience with religious publications/products.

WE OFFER:

- Great Christian working environment
- Excellent benefits and compensation package
- Opportunity to excel and grow.

IF QUALIFIED, REPLY TO: GARY MAGGART

LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES,
HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT
MSN 121, 127 9TH AVENUE NORTH
NASHVILLE, TN 37234-0121

(tel.) 615-251-2990
(fax) 615-251-5017
HRDept@lifeway.com

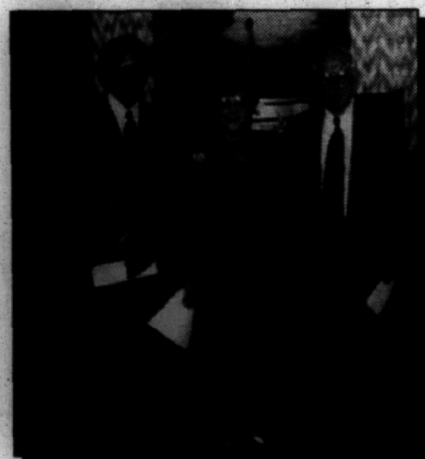
JUST FOR THE RECORD



RAs of Lollars Grove Church, Eupora



Brian Hudson, of New Liberty Church, Tishomingo Association, presented Clyde Bray, wife of the late Lathon Bray, former pastor of New Liberty Church, an attendance pin recognizing 40 years of consecutive years of Sunday School attendance on Oct. 4.



Barefoot Springs Church, Rankin Association, presented rocking chairs to pastor Joe Stovall and his wife Kathleen on Oct. 25 upon the announcement of their retirement. A reception was held in their honor. The church also commissioned Larry and Linda Tate as volunteer in mission co-ordinators for Area V in Rankin and Metro associations.

RAs of Lollars Grove Church, Eupora, were recognized during a ceremony held on Sept. 12. Each one received a RA shirt for various services. Samuel Jackson, Doug Smith, Marcus McCulloch, and Lee Allen Kendrick received RA mugs for good attendance. Pictured (from left, front row) are McCulloch, Kendrick, Jackson, Chris Williamson; (back row) Mike Rogers, (leader), John Thompson, John Tulipan, Smith, and Dorothy Rogers (leader). Not pictured was Lee Welch.

Baptist Health Systems has announced the formation of Baptist Home Medical Services LLC. The new company is a joint venture between Baptist and Med South Corp. of Jasper, Ala., which will provide home medical

equipment and respiratory equipment services in a network of locations throughout central Mississippi. For more information call (601) 968-9700.

Broadmoor Church, Jackson, will present "1998 Broadmoor Christmas," directed by Mike Harland, on Dec. 12 and 13 at 6 p.m.



North Batesville Church, Panola Association, organized in 1967, has built a new two-story educational building, which includes a preschool department. The past year the church has organized RAs, GAs, and a Brotherhood. At this time the church has completed all the goals to receive another Eagle Award, with an enrollment in Sunday School of 487 and an average attendance of over 325. The church baptized 144 during the past year and runs over 300 in Discipleship Training. The total attendance includes outreach units at two jails, a homebound ministry, and a bus and van ministry that runs for all services. Lee Hudson is pastor.

Calvary Church, New Augusta, will conduct a live nativity scene beginning at 6 p.m. on Dec. 18 and 19. Refreshments will be served in fellowship hall. For more information, call (601) 964-8343.

The sanctuary choir of **Bentonia Church, Bentonia**, will present The Shepherd's Song, a drama musical by Dennis and Nan Allen, on Dec. 13 at 6 p.m. For more information, call Tracy Pace at (601) 755-2920.

Ora Church, Collins, will present scenes of the Christmas story come to life in a drive-thru live Nativity, on Dec. 11 and 12 at 6 p.m. The church is located on Hwy. 49, one mile north of Collins.

Live Nativity Dramatization will be presented by Walker Hill Church, Brandon, on Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Robert W. Netterville Jr. is pastor. For more information call (601) 825-6210.

The combined choirs of Cross Roads Church and Shiloh United Methodist Church will perform a musical, The Best Gift Of All, on Dec. 13. The performance will be held at 11 a.m. at Shiloh Methodist Church and 4:30 p.m. at Cross Roads Church.

Call for Free BROCHURE

BAPTISTRIES HEATERS, PUMPS FACTORY DIRECT

TOLL FREE NATIONWIDE 1-800-251-0679

FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRY CO.

3511 HIXSON PIKE • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

FULL-TIME PASTOR: Shady Grove Baptist Church is seeking God's direction for a full-time pastor. Send resumes to 3166 Deer Creek Rd, Batesville, MS 38606.

PART-TIME MUSIC/YOUTH MINISTER: McDowell Road Baptist Church, Jackson, MS. Send resume to L. Renfro, 1020 W. McDowell Rd., Jackson, MS 39204. Call 601-372-1594.

FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC:

Wade Baptist Church in Wade, MS is searching for a full-time minister of music. Please forward resume to the following address: Music Search Committee, c/o Don Miller, Chariman, 2716 Dogwood Lane, Pascagoula, MS 39581.

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION MINISTER: First Baptist Church Magee. Please send resumes to: Mr. Frank Lang, 103 Pine Cove Lane, Magee, MS 39111.



Blythe Creek Church, Choctaw Association, recently held a deacon ordination service for Todd Lanthrip. Pictured (from left) are Thomas Graves, newly installed deacon; Danny Irvin, pastor; Lanthrip; and Bobby Martin, newly installed deacon.



The **Fishermen**, a singing group of the Mississippi State Baptist Student Union, is available for worship services, youth activities, retreats, and banquets. Contact: MSU-BSU, Box BU, MS. State, MS 39762, or (601) 323-5761, or e-mail: bsu@ra.msstate.edu. Members pictured (from left) are Stewart Cannon, Lexington; Neeli Jones, Vicksburg; Tara Thrasher, Kosciusko; Anna Mary Dowdle, Senatobia; Farrah Deese, Columbus; Kendy Jenkins, Starkville; Jeremy Lokits, Murfreesboro, Tenn. Not pictured is Grant Alford, Senatobia.

Flowood Church, Flowood, will present its Christmas musical, "Celebrate the Season" on Dec. 12 and 13 at 6 p.m. For more information, call the church at (601) 992-6464.

Are your seniors tired of crawling over the HUMP? The solution is a 15-passenger van with an aisle, raised roof & electric step.

Call Tri-State Van & Bus Today! 1-800-330-3622

BUSES! VANS! PEOPLE MOVERS!

Mississippi Valley Gas Company

Safety is our first priority.

CLASSIFIED ADS

RATE: 50 cents per word, \$5 minimum. Cash with order except on contract advertising. Include name, address, zip code, and phone number in word count. No blind ads. ONLY WRITTEN ADS ACCEPTED.

RODGERS ORGANS: Sales and Service. (504) 524-1216.

CFI — PEWS, NEW & used. Baptistries, steeples, & stained glass, MS & ALA. 1-800-830-0583

PASSENGER VANS FOR private and church groups. From \$59.95 per day/ limited free miles/7 to 15-seat. Occasionally for sale: quality used vans. Auto & Truck Rental, Jackson (601) 948-3391. Since 1965.

GOSPEL PIANO CASSETTES! Uplifting instrumental favorites! The stiffnecked might also enjoy! Free Brochure! Jacky Campbell, 11 Clifford, Natchez, MS 39120.

FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP: Please send resume to Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, 8645 Kenwood Road, Cincinnati, OH 45242.

NOTCH ESTATES—BRANSON, MO. Condo near Silver Dollar City. 2BR, 2BA, sleeps 6. Stay 3 nights, 4th free; or 4 nights, 5th free. Free continental breakfast.

\$105 daily. All visitors eligible for drawing to receive free 4 day return trip. Call (601) 746-4632.

FOR SALE: Ron Dicianni Artist Proof of "The Prodigal." This signed and numbered print is rare and breathtaking. Also available a personally signed "spiritual warfare" print by Dicianni. Call (205) 486-3790.

CUSTOM STAINED GLASS windows for churches and homes. Stained Glassworks, Inc. 1-800-605-2970.

MUSIC EVANGELIST: Concerts, revivals, supply. Carolyn Winborne, PO Box 187, Mt. Olive, MS 39119, (601) 797-4326.

FOR SALE: 1997 Ford Clubwagon XLT 15 passenger van, dual air and more, great condition. Call 939-1229 W, 824-1479 H, \$18,500.

FOR SALE: 18 church pews solid oak-padded seats. Excellent condition. Must see to appreciate. Red Banks Baptist Church. Phone: 601-252-2294; 601-252-6795; 601-252-2875.

THE ONLY ONE?

Editor:

Surely most Mississippians know by now that Oprah Winfrey came back to her hometown of Kosciusko recently to dedicate a home she built for Habitat for Humanity and to promote her new movie, *Beloved*.

I invited myself to the formal celebration in her honor that afternoon in the Attala County coliseum during which she received well-deserved applause from fans and awards from community leaders. I say "well-deserved" with sincerity because Oprah has done much for charity and has not forgotten her roots in our beloved state.

My purpose in going, however, was to ask her in the public forum of questions and answers, and to ask in the presence of the many children and young people there, about her movie.

The movie is R-rated for graphic violence, language, sexuality, and nudity. My question would have been why these elements were necessary to tell a great story of a tragic time in American history, and how she reconciled the explicit nature of the film with her claim to be a Christian who in the past has publicly embraced Judeo-Christian ethics.

Of course, I'm disappointed in Oprah's complicity in Hollywood's evident assault on American families with her *Beloved* film. I would be more disappointed, however, if I thought I was the only one who cared.

Arlis Nichols
Enterprise

MUSIC MINISTER NEEDED

Editor:

Resumes are being accepted by Garden Ranch Baptist

Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, for a part-time minister of music. Send resume to David Hurst, Search Committee, Garden Ranch Baptist Church, 3830 Van Teylingen Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80917. Phone (719) 591-1487.

David Hurst
Colorado Springs, Colo.

REGRETS STATEMENT

Editor:

I would like to respond to the article entitled "Hemphill: BF&M reaction due to poor preaching" which appeared in the October 29 edition of *The Baptist Record*.

I regret that Dr. Hemphill, one of Southern Baptists' outstanding public leaders, found it necessary to be publicly critical of his colleagues about their preaching just because people's response to the change to the BF&M was not what he anticipated. He did pastors an injustice to say that the reaction to the change made in the BF&M is indicative "of a lack of strong biblical preaching." I am disappointed that he would generalize pastors in such a judgmental manner. Such blanket statements are void of integrity and validity and serve only to alienate.

Durwood Broughton
Gulfport

LATIN CONTACTS SOUGHT

Editor:

Here in the International Mission Board Middle America region, we are aware that many Mexicans and Central Americans have family members living in the United States. It is our hope that some of those family members have come to know Christ through churches in your state.

These new Christians provide vital contacts for our missionaries here on the field. Entrance to towns and villages might not be granted except through the mention of a familiar name. We ask that state-side churches aid our evangelism efforts by connecting us with their Latin-

American members. If anyone would like us to contact family members in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, or Panama, please give them the following information: IMB, Middle America region, P.O. Box 661447, Miami Springs, FL 33166. Telephone: 001-502-476-3521. E-mail: rebeccalynn@gold.guate.net
Rebecca Lynn
Miami Springs, Fla.

ENCOURAGE PRISONERS

Editor:

Greetings in Jesus' Name! In Matt. 25, we as Christians are told we will be judged by what we do for particular types of people.

However, few of our pastors today, our denominational leaders, or our state leaders seem to talk about this. Why?

Why are our churches so afraid to become involved with men and women who have made mistakes and are doing time? Jesus the Christ, the Son of God was a convicted criminal who was executed by a court of law just as many brother's and sisters of Christ are today and Jesus said we are to reach out to them as we reach out to him.

We need Christian people to be willing to write letters of encouragement to prisoners. We need our associations and state convention to begin looking into building places of refuge for men and women coming out of prison to reorient

them into society. Until we become involved in this neglected mission field, we are not doing what Jesus our Savior commanded us to do.

"I was in prison and you came unto me," the Son of God said! It is time for every church in Mississippi to reach out to those on the insides of our jails and prisons as we reach out to people in other states and lands.

If we neglect one command of Christ, we have neglected them all!

John Richard
Bay St. Louis

AVOID EVIL

Editor:

I would like to say in regard to the letter, *Effective Witness*, in the Oct. 1 issue of *The Baptist Record*: No, we should not praise this type of lifestyle. Wonder what Christ would say about his people doing like they do. I will say people face the Judgement Day and may hear him say depart from me (Matthew 7:15-27). Jesus Christ made the way and set the rules for all believers to follow. We will follow Christ or Satan (Acts 26:18). Christ gives the power to follow him (Luke 19:14, John 1:11-13, and Heb. 4:16).

People look at John 3:16 and think that is all for us to do but it isn't. See John 3:17-21. Christians must learn the Word of God and avoid all evil.

Charles D. Martin
Batesville

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Seven William Carey College faculty members have received the 1998 Who's Who Among America's Teachers recognition. Honored from the Hattiesburg campus were Alison Chestnut, Randall Harris, Thomas Huebner, Julia Mansell, B.J. Martin, and Beth Richmond. Denise Brown is the faculty honoree from the Coast campus. Teachers are nominated by former students and recognized for their professionalism.

William Carey College Theatre will present "Alice in

Wonderland," adapted by Michele Vacca from the Lewis Carroll Classic, as its annual play especially for children. Following a tradition of 30 years, the production is co-sponsored by the Hattiesburg Arts Council. Performances in the O.L. Quave Theatre are Dec. 15 and 16 at 7 p.m.; and Dec. 17 and 18 at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. For reservations, call (601) 582-6221.

Teresa Floyd, associate professor of Mathematics at Mississippi College (MC), has been named the 1998 Mathematics Teacher of the Year by the Mississippi Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM). Floyd received her education at Mississippi State University, MC, and the University of Missouri-Columbia.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

**JOSEPH
SAVED
A NATION
WITH
FOOD STORAGE
SURVIVAL
FOOD STORAGE**

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICES

3 WEEKS TO YOUR DOOR
PERMA-PAK SINCE 1953

CALL BILL
TOLL FREE

1-800-595-6492

Before It's Too Late!

FAX: 1-601-256-9082

PASSION PLAY OBERAMMERGAU 2000

(WELCOME ALL COMMUNITARIANS, FAMILIES, AND TOURS)

BAVARIAN HIGHLIGHTS - Germany, Austria, Switzerland
BEST OF ITALY - Rome, Florence, Venice, plus Salzburg
and Munich

IMPERIAL CAPITALS - Munich, Salzburg, Vienna,
Budapest, Prague, Cruise to Dresden, Berlin

(All Bryan Tours stay in the village of
Oberammergau in a first-class hotel)

Call, write, or fax for brochures:

BRYAN TOURS

P.O. Box 5221, Jackson, MS 39296

(601) 981-1345 or (800) 647-5296

Fax: 601-981-9335

E-Mail: bryantours@aol.com



ALL SIZES
SALES AND RENTALS

CHURCH BUSES

#1 MANUFACTURER
COMPETITIVE PRICING

SOUTHEASTERN BUS CO.

CLINTON, MS

1-800-423-9826

1-601-924-1982

Mississippians receive IMB appointments

FT. LAUDERDALE, Fla. (Special)— David A. and Laurie R. Bledsoe; Marty D. and Shari L. Holley; Edward R. (Ed) and Lynnette Johnson; and Mark E. and Peggy A. Tetley were among 90 people appointed by the International Mission Board during a service on Nov. 17 at the Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

The Bledsoes will live in Brazil which has recently experienced tremendous economic growth. He will start and develop churches and she will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Since 1996 he has been a community missions ministry assistant at Bellevue Church in Cordova, Tenn.

Born in Memphis, Tenn., David Bledsoe is the son of Bill and Joyce Bledsoe of Millington, Tenn. While growing up he lived in Millington and considers it his hometown. He considers Bellevue Church and Lucy Church in Millington his home churches.

He received his education at State Technical Institute, Memphis; The University of Memphis; and Mid-America Seminary, Germantown, Tenn.

Born in Corinth, Laurie Bledsoe is the daughter of Ron and Nelda Mitchell of Huber Heights, Ohio. Her father is pastor of First Church in Huber Heights and the president of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio.

While growing up she also lived in Ripley, Derby, Laurel, and Walnut, and Miambisburg, Ohio. She considers Corinth her hometown and Bellevue Church her home church.

She received her education at Northeast Mississippi Community College, Booneville; Union University, Jackson, Tenn.; and The University of Memphis.

The Bledsoes have one child, Marissa Joy, born in 1996.

The Holleys will also live in Brazil. He will start and develop churches and she will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Since 1995 he has been pastor of Springhill Church in Franklin, Ala.

Born in Tallassee, Ala., Marty Holley is the son of Byron and Katye Holley of Eclectic, Ala. While growing up he also lived in Eclectic and considers it his hometown. He considers Mount Hebron East Church there his home church. Philadelphia Church, Birmingham, Ala.; Travis Avenue Church, Fort Worth, Texas; and King Street Church and Northwest Cocoa Church, both in Cocoa, Fla., also were influential in his Christian growth.

He received his education

from Samford University, Birmingham; and Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

He was a church planter for Bay Street Church in Eustis, Fla., and a North American Mission Board church planter in Cocoa and Palm Bay, Fla.

Born in Prentiss, Shari Holley is the daughter of Kenneth and Polly Polk of that city. While growing up she also lived in Norfolk, Va., and Citronelle, Ala. She considers Prentiss her hometown and Oak Grove Church there her home church. Travis Avenue Church in Fort Worth and King Street Church and Northwest Cocoa Church, both in Cocoa, also were influential in her Christian growth.

She received her education from the University of Mobile (Ala.) and Southwestern Seminary.

As missionary associates the Johnsons will live in the Philippines. Southern Baptist missionaries in the Philippines work with three Filipino conventions and the Chinese Baptist Convention for a comprehensive approach to spreading the Gospel. He will start and develop churches and she will be

involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Since 1997 he has been pastor of Northside Church in Huntsville, Ala.

Born and reared in Burnsville, Ed Johnson is the

son of Patty Johnson of that city and the late Will Mose Johnson.

He was pastor of Clarksdale Church in Harvest, Ala.; Rocky Springs Church in Amory; Pineview Church in Huntsville, Ala.; Prospect Church and Maranatha Church, both in Fayetteville, Tenn.; and Tishomingo Church, Tishomingo.

Born and reared in Iuka, Lynn Johnson is the daughter of Max and Fran Weaver of that city.

The Johnsons have two grown children.

The Tetleys will live in France. Since 1990 he has been pastor of North Pompano Church in Pompano Beach, Fla.

Born and reared in St. Louis, Mo., Mark Tetley is the son of the late Robert and Hazel Tetley. He considers Christ Memorial Church there his home church.

He received his education from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and Mid-America Seminary in Germantown, Tenn.

He was youth minister at Trinity Church in El Dorado, Ark., and Kirby Parkway Church in Memphis, Tenn.; pastor of Trinity North Baptist Mission in El Dorado; and associate pastor of Bible Church in Byhalia.

Born in Springdale, Ark., Peggy Tetley is the daughter of Rogers Edmondson of Clinton, Ark., and the late Mary Lee Edmondson. While growing up she also lived in Danville, Ark., and considers it her hometown. She considers First Church in Danville her home church. Elmdale Church in Springdale also was influential in her Christian growth.

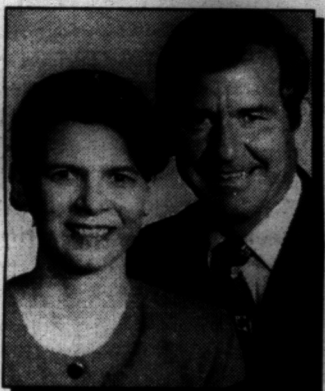
She received her education from Ouachita Baptist University and also attended Hendrix College in Conway, Ark.



The Bledsoes



The Holleys



The Johnsons



The Tetleys



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

Christmas is such a family time, and I don't have family. How can I overcome the depression that goes along with loneliness during the holiday season? Please don't give me the old saw about going out and helping others.

The "Season of Good Cheer" is often not very cheerful for people in your situation. Loneliness can be rough, and you have plenty of company. Even people who seem to have it all can be lonely. Go to the mall and observe these people; you will often see loneliness written all over their faces. As a young man in a solitary career — shepherding — King David understood loneliness and learned to cope by stopping long enough to listen for the voice of God (Ps. 46:10). You may feel lonely, but you are never alone (Is. 49:15-16). Ponder what God has done for you and think on the joys you have experienced this year. Consider this piece by an unknown author:

Survival Kit for Everyday

◆ Toothpick. Use to pick out only the good qualities in others (Matt. 7:1).

◆ Rubber band. For flexibility when things don't work out the way you expected (Rom 8:28).

◆ Bandage. To help heal hurts of others as well as your own hurts (Col. 3:12-14).

◆ Pencil. Excellent for documenting blessings (Eph. 1:3).

◆ Eraser. Everyone makes mistakes. (Gen. 50:15-21).

◆ Chewing gum. Helps you stick to the goal until accomplished (Phil 4:13).

◆ Mint. A reminder that you're worth a "mint" to your Heavenly Father (John 3:16-17).

◆ Candy Kiss. Everyone can use a hug or a kiss, so hand these out liberally (1 John 4:7).

◆ Tea bag. Set aside daily time to relax and go over that list of God's blessings — see "Pencil" for more details (1 Thess. 5:18).

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Why accept the good news?

Luke 1:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 1 John 1:1-4

By Carl M. White

After I spoke to a local Alcoholics Anonymous chapter a few years ago, a man shared with me how much that fellowship meant to him. He found support and encouragement from a group who shared a common need with him. Anyone who is able to find a group of companions to depend on and call friends is blessed. Life is too difficult a journey to try and make it all alone.

This is a reflection of what the Bible calls, on a higher plain, koinonia, or fellowship. Yet, we must be careful to distinguish true Christian fellowship from the many other meaningful associations that

can be found in life. Just because a group of people get together with food at the church does not constitute Christian fellowship. True koinonia is one of the blessed results of believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

A certain truth (Luke 1:1-4). It has its beginning in certain truths. The good physician Luke made it clear in the opening verses of Luke that he had made a concerted effort to get the facts straight for his friend Theophilus. Luke understood that true Christian fellowship is founded on the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In John 17, which is known as the High Priestly Prayer,



White

Jesus prayed for himself, for his disciples, and then he looked way into the future and he prayed for us — the people who would believe the Gospel because of their testimony. His singular request for us was that we might be one, or, that we might have true Christian fellowship.

This fellowship was of such importance, Jesus prayed that we might experience it.

Obviously, Luke knew this fellowship with Theophilus. Though historically obscure to us, Theophilus was likely a Roman, perhaps a government official. Though separated by nationality and race, Luke found a common bond with this Roman through the truth of the Gospel story.

An accurate content (1 Cor. 15:1-4). It cannot be just any Gospel that forms the basis of fellowship. Though we are liv-

ing in what some call the "post-denominational era," doctrine still matters.

Writing to the troubled congregation at Corinth, Paul delineates the three most important truths of the Gospel. First, Christ died for our sins, not because he was a political revolutionary. Second, like all people who die, he was buried. Third, Christ was raised from the dead the third day. On top of these three truths, Paul makes one other astonishing claim. All of this was foretold in the scriptures. Of course, Paul was making reference to the only scriptures he had, the Old Testament. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, he and others were still writing the New Testament.

When Buddha died in 483 B.C., some followers built tents at his tomb and worshiped for years. Mohammed died in Medina in 632. His followers still visit his tomb there. When the followers of Christ visit his

tomb, it is empty! The reality of this truth builds bonds of fellowship that can only be described as glorious.

Expected results (1 John 1:1-4). There are many benefits to becoming a Christian, not the least of which is the gift of eternal life. Yet, not all of the results of faith is found in the future. A present reality is fellowship.

John, the beloved disciple, makes this clear. Accepting the Gospel results in an experience of fellowship that is here and now, both with God himself, and with others.

There is something exclusive and inclusive about this fellowship. It is exclusive in that, only believers truly understand the meaning of it. It is inclusive because anyone who hears the Gospel can believe, and receiving the truth of Jesus Christ makes possible for one to enter into the joy of Christian fellowship.

White is a member of First Church, Clinton.

LIFE AND WORK

The gift of creation

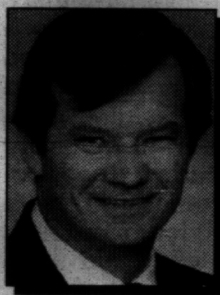
Psalm 104:1-5, 13-15, 24, 29-34

By Hugh Plunkett

"As I gaze into the night sky and see the work of Your fingers; the moon and stars suspended in space. Oh, what is man, that you are mindful of him?" These words begin the awe inspiring anthem, "The Majesty and Glory of Your Name," written by Tom Fettke. They are a paraphrase of Psalm 8. Ancient man made gods of the sun, the moon, and shooting stars. Modern man has tried to explain creation, only to fail miserably. You cannot explain creation without recognizing the God of creation.

Creation reflects God's majesty (vv. 1-5). The psalmist describes the power of God

when he says that God, "set the ends of the earth on its foundation; it can never be moved." The psalmist praised God because of his greatness, splendor, and majesty. God's greatness is seen in his creation and in his power. Hurricane Mitch, which packed winds in excess of 180 miles per hour, will go down in history as one of the most powerful storms of all time. Yet, it wanes in comparison to the power of God. All of man's scientific achievements point to an order, a control over the universe that is unexplainable and unimaginable. Our wonderment at the marvels of nature should lead us back to the one who created it.



Plunkett

Creation provides our sustenance (vv. 13-15). My father was a school teacher by occupation, a music director by choice, and a gardener by necessity. We had a huge garden; large enough to feed our family of seven, and then some. My father tended the garden with infinite care. When it was dry, he

watered it. When a late frost threatened to "nip the corn," we covered each corn sprout with a milk jug before nightfall and took the milk jugs off before going to school. We did this on acres of corn! My father provided for the garden because he knew that the garden was going to provide for us. Our heavenly Father does the same for us on a much larger scale. He has orchestrated nature to work for our benefit. God uses his creation to provide for our needs.

Creation depends on God (vv. 24, 29-30). Two recent

motion pictures, "Deep Impact," and "Armageddon," are based on the plot that the universe runs amuck and the earth is threatened by a comet and a Texas-sized asteroid. In fact, in the later movie these words of warning are given. "It happened before; it will happen again. It is only a matter of time." However, the psalmist declares that without God's constant presence, we would die. The whole universe is sustained by God's Spirit.

Just how big is the universe? If the thickness of this page represents the distance of the earth to the sun (93 million miles), then the distance to the nearest star is a 71 foot-high stack of paper. The diameter of our galaxy is a 310 mile high stack of paper. The edge of the known universe is not reached until the pile of paper is 31 million miles high. Galaxies are as common as blades of grass in a meadow, and this is just our known universe. Is it any wonder that we stand in

awe of the God that holds this creation in place? Everything God does is God-sized! Creation depends upon God's sustaining grace and power, and we do, too!

Creation inspires our celebration (vv. 31-34). When mankind tries to contemplate the vastness of God's creation, we often get bogged down in "how questions" — How did God create? How long did it take; and How long will it last? Maybe we would be better served to take the attitude of a child and realize that the "how" questions of creation are not nearly as important as the "Who" of creation — the great "I Am," Jehovah God.

"O Lord, our God, the majesty and glory of your name transcends the earth and fills the heavens.

O Lord, our God, little children praise you perfectly, and so would we. Alleluia!"

Plunkett is minister of music and adults at Clarksdale Church.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Authority for action

Mark 1:21-3:12

By Dee McDermitt

Someone said that authority is power in action. In this section, Jesus uses that power to attack anything that oppresses and dehumanizes the people he encounters. His actions were a visual representation of what it means to be fishers of men, to redeem mankind from whatever harms, and to bring wholeness and freedom. Mark relates how the people were amazed at this unquestioned authority.

Authority sensed (1:21-22). Jesus went with the disciples to Capernaum. This city on the Sea of Galilee was the center for his ministry. When he entered the synagogue and taught, the people sensed the difference in

his teaching from that of the scribes. He didn't quote a rabbi or book, but spoke God's word with authority. When he encountered a man in the synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit and freed him, the people murmured and exclaimed about this new teaching and how he had power over even the spirits.

Authority's source (1:32-35). The people were drawn to this man who had authority like they had never seen before. At last, many had hope for a better life and many were brought to him for healing. The scriptures say that he worked long into the evening ministering. Nevertheless, he got up before



McDermitt

daylight and went to a quiet place to talk to the Father, seeking guidance and strength. Even though he was fully God, he knew he could do nothing apart from the Father. This must have left a lasting impression on his disciples who did not understand at first why he would leave opportunity in order to be alone with God. This is one of three references in Mark to Jesus' habit of prayer. All three are at night and during times of difficulty. What an example for us today. We can do many things on our own strength, but without God's blessing, instruction, and strength, our actions lack power and hope for a hurting humanity.

Authority over sin (2:5-7 and 9-12a). Things began to get exciting as Jesus took a giant step forward, showing people who he really was. Aware that

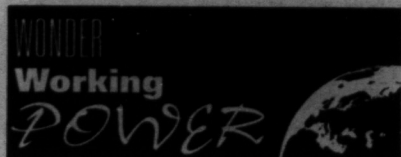
there were teachers of the law present, he spoke to a paralytic and forgave his sins. The teachers were appalled and silently accused him of blasphemy. They knew that only God could forgive sins and they didn't believe he was God. Of course, being God, he knew their thoughts and didn't wait for them to voice their disapproval. He told them that he does have the authority to forgive sins and immediately proved it with his actions. It is interesting that blasphemy was one of the charges brought against him when he stood trial before the Sanhedrin.

Authority over the Sabbath (3:4-5). Jesus asserted his authority over the Sabbath by claiming that he was "Lord even of the Sabbath." He had already been questioned by the Pharisees concerning the Sabbath. He answered that the Sabbath was made for man, not vice versa. The Pharisees began

looking for reasons to accuse him and they entered the synagogue on the Sabbath to see if he would heal a man with a withered hand. Jesus knew their hard hearts but didn't shrink back. He took another giant step when he told the man to stand up in full view. He asked the Pharisees a question they couldn't answer and then restored the man's hand.

Mark records Jesus' human emotion of anger. It was directed at these "teachers" who were merely looking for a reason to accuse Jesus and who failed to see the real issue of a person in need. The hardness of heart they displayed was a form of pride and showed a stubborn resistance to God's purposes. This angered Jesus when he saw it in his enemies, and saddened him when he saw it in his friends.

McDermitt is a member of Rawls Springs Church, Hattiesburg.



Lottie Moon
Christmas Offering for
International Missions

NATIONAL GOAL:
\$110,000,000



COVERING THE COUNTRY — During a volunteer project at Ecuador's Belen de Cocotog Baptist Church, pastor Manuel Pumisacho (right) greets one of his church members. "My goal is to go ... My principle goal is that there won't be an indigenous community in Ecuador that doesn't have available to it the witness of God's love and the power of his precious Word," says Pumisacho, whose Quichua Indian congregation has started about 30 new Baptist missions in Ecuador. (BP photo by Sandy King)

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
copyright 1998

MHZ FYIOI MHITYCYZ
LGQ, IMRGHK, GE GI
TCGEEYH, ELME QMH
ILMSS HWE SGAY NR
NCYMZ MSWHY, NOE NR
YAYCR TWCZ WU KWZ.

SODY UWOC: UWOC

Clue: L = H

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Joel Two Twenty-Six.

Power of God delivers Ecuadoran drunk

QUITO, Ecuador (BP) — When Manuel Pumisacho accepted Christ as Savior, he was so drunk he could barely walk.

Pumisacho, a Quichua Indian from Zambiza, Ecuador, had just left his favorite bar. His shirt was torn and bloody from a fist fight.

As he staggered down the street toward home, Pumisacho began to sense God's presence. "Why am I like this?" he thought, remembering times his Christian brother-in-law had shared his faith with him. "If

recalls Pumisacho. "I said, 'Please forgive me. I'm not going to hit you anymore. I love you.'"

As Pumisacho tells this story more than 20 years later, his voice shakes with emotion, and he wipes away tears. Missionary Mark Robbins, translating for him, pauses as Pumisacho regains his composure.

"It's amazing what God does when he touches a life," interjects Robbins. Pumisacho's prayer partner and a Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionary from Pensacola, Fla.

Before his conversion, Pumisacho was following in the footsteps of his father, who died of alcoholism when Pumisacho was 13. His mother died the same year. When he met Christ at age 24, Pumisacho's life took a dramatic turn.

Soon he got a job as a janitor at a Christian school in Quito, Ecuador's capital. Later, school officials trained him as a mechanic. While in that job, Pumisacho felt God's call to preach.

Since he had only an elementary school education, he went back to school at night. He couldn't afford school supplies, so he got paper from used notebooks other students had thrown away. Later he became the first indigenous student to attend the Baptist seminary in Quito.

He even earned a law degree so he could stand up for the rights of Ecuador's indigenous evangelicals, who often experience religious persecution by followers of a religion that mixes Roman Catholicism and indigenous beliefs.

Pumisacho himself has suffered persecution while sharing the gospel among indigenous people, who comprise about 40 percent of Ecuador's population.

The first time it happened was during a service at Belen de Cocotog Baptist Church near Quito, where Pumisacho now is pastor. A mob of townspeople burst into the sanctuary and began hitting the congregation with sticks.

The attackers — who included some of Pumisacho's relatives — brought with them the community band, which played during the beatings. Later four police trucks arrived to dispel the violence.

Another episode occurred about a decade ago in the town of Chachas while Pumisacho was leading a home Bible study. A drunken crowd stormed the house and began beating the worshippers, including Pumisacho's pregnant wife.

"The children were screaming," he recalls. "We were crying and praying for God's protection."

Meanwhile, their opponents doused the house with gasoline to set it on fire. But when they began striking matches, none of them would light. "We believe nothing happened because we were praying so hard," says Pumisacho.

During the confrontation, Pumisacho dodged a blow that accidentally hit another attacker. Soon the mob began fighting each other.

In the chaos, the believers fled. Pumisacho and his family spent the night hiding in a field. Later police escorted them out of town.

Pumisacho stayed away from Chachas until earlier this year, when local officials allowed a team of Florida Baptist volunteers to lead evangelistic medical clinics there.

Through the team's work, 15 people accepted Christ.

A week later Pumisacho, Robbins, and International Service Corps worker Mike Biggio, a former Roman Catholic from Montgomery, Ala., returned to Chachas to lead a Bible study. Forty-five people showed up.

Today Pumisacho teaches a weekly Bible study — without opposition — in a home within view of the place where he was attacked years before.

"After some suffering, I feel real joy knowing the Lord opened this door," he says.

"I thank God for the persecution," the pastor adds. "Now I fear no one. I don't worry about anything."

I have complete trust in the Lord."



Kazak's dreams lead her, many others to Christ

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan (BP) — She was the first. Only God could have known she would lead so many others in Kazakhstan to know Christ.

Gulya was born in a Kazak village in Soviet-ruled Central Asia. Her people had brought Islam to the region long ago, but as a child she was brought up to believe what the Communist Party taught: There is no God.

Still, when her mother died, 7-year-old Gulya wondered, "If there is a God, why does he let people die? Why does he not see my tears?"

She went to live with an aunt, a cruel woman who beat her. As she grew older, she seldom thought of God, but she feared death. At night, when the fear gripped her, she would get up and walk.

In 1981, her husband of 28 years left her alone to raise five children. Soon after, she lost her job, and in desperation went to Tashkent, capital of neighboring Uzbekistan. There someone

shared with her for the first time the good news of God's love.

The Holy Spirit whetted her appetite to know more. She read a book comparing Muhammad, Islam's prophet, with Jesus. The difference soon became obvious: Muhammad was a man; Jesus was Lord.

One night Gulya dreamed she was asking for forgiveness from God. She realized her feet were dirty, and a man suggested, "Wash your feet in the river." She did, and they were clean.

In another dream, she saw the sun. Many people appealed to her: "Follow the sun, and we will follow you!"

When she told her Christian friend in Tashkent about the dreams, her friend exclaimed: "You must tell everybody! The dream means that you will accept Jesus and many people will follow you by believing in him."

Gulya accepted Christ as her Savior in 1991 and was baptized two years later. Soon after

her baptism, two other young Kazaks then accepted Jesus as Lord and came to the Russian Baptist church she was attending. They were the only three ethnic Kazaks in the church and felt out of place.

With help from friends, Gulya started a small fellowship. The group began without a pastor, but soon God sent a young man whose Turkic language was similar to Kazak, and he could preach, sing and play guitar.

Today the church Gulya started counts more than 200 baptized believers. New converts are added nearly every week. Sunday morning worship is usually conducted in Kazak, Russian and Uzbek.

Believers also meet Saturday night for Bible study and often pray all night Friday. The congregation constituted as a church last year and calls itself "Senim," which means "faith."

At least once a week Gulya, her pastor, and other believers show the "Jesus" film and

share their faith in public buildings, mosques, homes. They often spend days in Kazak or Uzbek villages.

One Muslim leader stormed into their church, angry that his own daughter-in-law and grandchild had accepted Jesus. Gulya and the pastor gave him a Bible and showed him the "Jesus" film. Now he teaches Muslim children from the Bible in the Islamic school he runs.

Another time, while team members were showing "Jesus" and distributing books, police detained them.

"We are not pitting one religion against another," Gulya told them. "We are just presenting the truth. Take this cassette and see if there is anything that would mislead children. If you find anything wrong, you can put me in prison." After a few hours they were released.

Gulya remains determined to introduce Kazaks to the Savior she has found — regardless of the opposition.

